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Fall From Grace? Did Speaker Herb Wesson spurn Assemblywoman Rebecca Cohn's lust for the Health Committee chair? No one's talking.

Public Eye

Well-Oiled

A couple of weeks ago, Eye suggested that Assemblywoman **REBECCA COHN**'s failure to snag the chairpersonship of the Assembly's powerful Health Committee implied a loss of clout with Speaker **HERB WESSON**. Cohn heatedly dismisses that loose speculation and says that actually Wesson offered her the Health job if she wanted it, but that he really needed her to head up his new Internet and entertainment committee. It would have been nice to include that with the original item, but Cohn hasn't been in the habit of returning Eye's phone messages. ... Cohn also offered us some journalism advice, saying we should never run that kind of item without interviewing the Speaker, who would have set us straight. So we called him. "I don't discuss how and who and why I have put people where," Wesson

illuminated. "At the end of the day, when we were going through who was going to go where, I asked Miss Cohn if she would be the chair of this committee that I created: Arts, Entertainment, Sports, Tourism and Internet Media. I indicated that this is what I needed her to do." We don't know if the speaker mentioned that the post comes with tickets to the Grammys, among other Hollywood swag. Though Wesson dolloped liberal praise on Cohn, he wouldn't confirm that he offered her the Health Committee. Meanwhile, Eye hears from a trusted Capitol mole that Cohn will also be the next chair of another committee, the Joint Legislative Audit Committee. Assemblyman **DEAN FLOREZ** (D-Fresno), who's likely to ascend to the state Senate next year, recently took over that committee from **FRED KEELEY** (D-Santa Cruz). So if Wesson hands her that committee, it would be a pretty good appointment. Wesson wouldn't confirm his intent there, either. "I'll let you guys read the tea leaves," he generously offered.

Mean Streets

A long-debated plan to change some of downtown San Jose's one-way streets back to two-way traffic is back on the front burner. A committee made up of neighbors, business owners and other downtown stakeholders asked to study downtown circulation by Mayor **RON GONZALES** and downtown Councilwoman **CINDY CHAVEZ** is working to finalize its recommendation. A large part of the plan would involve converting some of downtown's one-way speedways back to the way they were in the 1960s. "We've been working on it since I got on the council," says Chavez, who supports the plan. **ERIK SHOENNAUER**, a consultant to Chavez, says the committee is looking at cars, pedestrians, bikes and transit. "We're trying to find perfect balance, and the preliminary numbers show that many of the

one-way segments could be converted or downsized and still allow people to get in and out." Neighborhood groups and Walk San Jose have been asking the city for the change to slow down traffic and make the streets safer for pedestrians. The streets in question are Third, Fourth, 10th, 11th, Julian, St. John, Almaden and Vine. The final plan should go to the council sometime in May.

Blank Slates

Russian camera cultists are taking over the San Jose Redevelopment Agency's ubiquitous blue walls. San Jose artists **CHERRI LAKEY** and **BRIAN EDER** are dedicated members of the cult of Lomo, the small, cheap Russian camera. The plan they cooked up was to give the cameras to a few dozen local kids, turn them loose to shoot their lives, mount the prints on plywood boards and put them up on the many blank walls surrounding construction sites in downtown San Jose. Last week, Lakey and Eder installed the first collages at First and San Carlos streets. "We want to enliven San Jose," Lakey says. Lakey and Eder, who own Two Fish Design Group and run Anno Domini Gallery, are the brains behind Shark Byte Art. The photos represent the work of 50 local kids from age 4 to 20. The resulting images feature pets, cops, skateboarders, school buses and other ordinary yet profound images of ... well, whatever.

The Scourge of Norm

Anyone who's familiar with conservative pundit **ANN COULTER** knows she's a bomb thrower. But Democratic Rep. **ANNA ESHOO** says Coulter has officially crossed the line from provocative to racist. In a Feb. 28 column for *Jewish World Review*, Coulter slammed Transportation Secretary **NORM MINETA**

because he doesn't support additional ethnic scrutiny of Arab and Muslim travelers. Coulter calls the former San Jose mayor a "scourge" and says, "He is given plum government jobs solely and exclusively because he is a minority." The column ends with Coulter saying she's sick of hearing Mineta recall the day his family boarded a train at the station in San Jose on their way to an internment camp in 1942. "Good G-d!" Coulter writes. "A guard took Mineta's baseball bat as a child, and as a result he's subjecting all of America to the Bataan Death March! Someone please give him a baseball bat." So, the peninsula legislator is pressing President Bush to stick up for his cabinet member and denounce Coulter. In a letter signed by 54 House members, including Reps. **ZOE LOFGREN** and **MIKE HONDA**, Eshoo says the column's "racist and hateful language is directed not only at your administration's policy on ethnic profiling but also at a distinguished member of your cabinet and our former colleague." Honda also got into the act this week, firing off a letter to the magazine and appearing with Coulter on **MICHAEL MEDVED**'s syndicated radio talk show (it isn't broadcast in the Bay Area) to confront her about the remarks. The White House hasn't replied yet. Mineta also hasn't said anything publicly.

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